

Mill traces history to Oregonian

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While Henry Pittock of the Portland Oregonian newspaper was busily founding and operating his new paper mill in Camas in the 1880s, Anthony Zellerbach and his sons were already firmly established in the paper merchandising industry in California.

After striking out in the California gold fields in the 1850s, Anthony joined his brother, Mark, in the mining ditch business. This arrangement eventually proved unsatisfactory to the middle-aged Anthony, however, and he moved his family to San Francisco in 1868 and began peddling paper.

In 1869, Anthony joined with Adolph Falk and bought out a stationery business. Within two years, Anthony was handling the business on his own after Falk's health failed.

By 1876, Anthony's business had grown enough for him to lease his first store in San Francisco. In the meantime, his three sons, Jacob, Isadore and Henry, were quickly learning the business of selling paper.

The business became known as A. Zellerbach & Sons in 1885, and was worth about \$20,000. When the second son of Anthony, Isadore, officially joined the firm in 1887, things really began to move.

Isadore, affectionately known as I.Z., convinced his brothers to help him aggressively seek out business, with the plan of expansion in their minds.

The appearance of the linotype machine in San Francisco in the early 1890s was a boon to the paper merchants, who had specialized in supplying

printers.

The financial panic of 1892-93 ruined many paper manufacturers, however. Pittock's mill in Camas was just about the only one still operating on the West Coast at that time, and feebly so.

By 1906, A. Zellerbach & Sons could be called a highly successful and lucrative business. Even after the great San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed much of the city, the Zellerbach family kept the faith, building the first major new business structure to be raised after the fire and earthquake in San Francisco. The building opened in 1907, and the name of the firm was changed to Zellerbach Paper Co., with I.Z. as president.

The paper merchandising firm eventually met difficulty in getting some of its specialty paper items. To overcome this problem, the company bought a small converter that supplied needed towels, added patents to improve the interfolding process, and, in 1914, formed the National Paper Products Corp.

This was the company's first small step toward becoming a manufacturer.

After Anthony died in 1911, I.Z. headed the corporation. After World War I broke out, the firm began buying paper mills to protect its source of supply. After the armistice of 1918, Zellerbach Paper Co. thrived again, with subdivisions of the company being formed.

Eventually, in the search for more paper mills, I.Z. met Louis Bloch in 1927. Bloch was vice president and general manager of Crown Willamette Paper Co., with a mill in Camas. I.Z. suggested a merger

between the two companies.

The result was Crown Zellerbach Corp., formed in 1928. With the improvement in economic conditions by 1938, Crown Zellerbach was refinanced and reorganized into the operating company it is today.

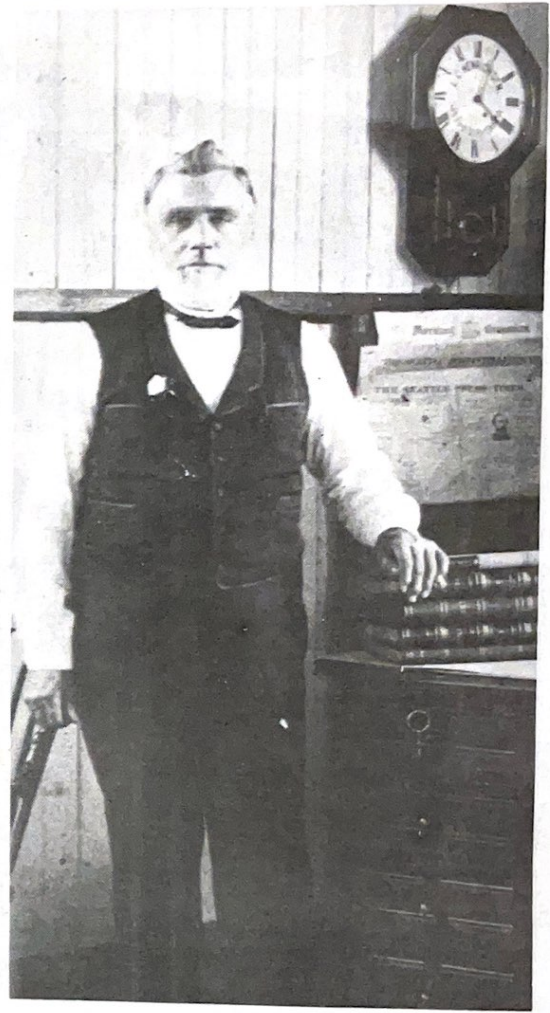
The Camas mill, as we know it today, really came into being in a huge expansion program in the years of 1929-30, just after Crown Zellerbach Corp. was formed.

Despite Depression gloom throughout the nation, Crown Zellerbach directors authorized the investment of millions of dollars in the expansion at Camas. The present converting plant was constructed on what had been a picnic area, and the overall plant capacity jumped from 240 tons per day to 400 tons per day.

The 1930s were good to the Camas mill. The mill, which began in the 1880s as a manufacturer of newsprint, saw this era end in 1930 when all newsprint manufacturing was stopped. The mill enjoyed a new role of being the largest specialty paper mill in the world.

Crown Zellerbach and the Camas mill did well during World War II. Paper production was pushed, and its machine shop was even pressed into service to build giant 17-ton ship rudders at a rate of four per week.

Since World War II, Crown Zellerbach has expanded dramatically, increasing its American market as well as expanding into foreign markets. The corporation's Camas mill has continued to be a vital part of Washington's, as well as Camas's economy.



LaCAMAS mill office scene, in 1891, shows office manager C. West caught in a "candid" moment of dignified calm.

R. A. BUTLER, LEFT, AND J.D. ZELLERBACH view new paper machine in January 1963 which added 40,000 tons to annual production at the Camas mill. The paper machine went into production on Dec. 31, 1962. Butler was resident manager of the mill at that time. The machine was designed to run light weight specialty sulphite and kraft grades.

